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ABSTRACT

The idea of the college as a residential and instructional entity preparing students for advanced study by establishing basic knowledge in the liberal arts has a long history in Europe and the United States. The German term "Bildung" describes this function well, with its suggestions of "knowledge, culture, the power of expression, character, manners, a rare balancing and maturing of qualities calculated to equip men to meet with dignity and competency the responsibilities of life." The institutional forms in which this function of education has been expressed, at least in its ideal form, in the earliest French, German, English, and American institutions have much in common: four years of study in a residential environment. But in each of these cultures, the forms have undergone radical adaptation. In France the college function moved out of the university and into secondary institutions. In Germany the college was first merged into the university and then separated into strong classical secondary schools, with the universities focusing on scientific development. In England much of the function remained in the university, with the arts disciplines at an advanced and specialized level. In the United States, the colleges have retained much of the traditional function, but much ambivalence and confusion have grown about this role in higher education, and the future of the independent, four-year, baccalaureate-granting college seems more problematic. (MSE)

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THE IDEA OF THE COLLEGE IN WESTERN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: A STUDY IN ADAPTATION FROM AN HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE FRANCE, GERMANY, ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES

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Occasional Papers in Higher Education

This is one of a series of papers issued under the auspices of the Higher Education Program at the University of Denver. The papers are not issued on a predetermined basis but are published in this form as staff members and/or advanced students in Higher Education have examined topics of current concern and prepared statements that my be longer than that of the usual journal article and yet are of sufficient general interest to merit distribution to the general higher educational community. These papers provide a way for the program at the University of Denver to share some of its work with a wider audience.

The Higher Education Program at the University of Denver occupies a unique position, as does the School of Education, of which it is a part, in that it is located within the College of Arts and Sciences of the University. The School of Education is an integral part of the College of Arts and Sciences, one of the six graduate degree-granting units within the university. The other units are the College of Business, the College of Law, the Graduate School of Librarianship, the Graduate School of International Studies and the Graduate School of Social Work.

As a unit within a department of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Program in Higher Education has a distinct advantage in that it may draw upon the resources of other departments within the College as well as participate in cooperative work with those departments. This is important, because in the sequence leading to the Ph.D. in Higher Education, students complete 40 of the required 90 quarter-hours in post-Master's study in one field outside of professional education. Students also complete a comprehensive examination in the cognate field as well as in Higher Education. Among the cognate areas selected by students in Higher Education have been the following: biological sciences, English, history, librarianship, mass communications, mathematics, philosophy, physical education, psychology, professional psychology, religious studies, social work, sociology, speech communication, business, international studies. Frequently, the student's dissertation committee will include representatives from these cognate fields.

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Copies of the first two papers are no longer available, and only limited copies of issues of 4-8 are still available. Copies of such papers as are still available may be secured by writing to: The Program in Higher Education, School of Education, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado, 80208.

*Note: In this paper the term "college" is employed in a restricted sense and refers to a single-purpose postsecondary institution of less than university status. It is difficult to maintain this distinction in the late twentieth century, for the term has undergone an evolution from designating a residential unit in the medieval European university, often limited to masters and scholars of the arts faculty, to become identified with university preparatory establishments in France and Germany, with the basic units of the residential universities in England, and with a generic designation for any higher educational establishment in the United States.

An historian of American higher education refers to the education provided in the free-standing four-year baccalaureate-degree-granting college as one of the oldest traditions of American higher education, "a tradition so fundamental, so all-encompassing that to call it merely a tradition is to undervalue it." (1) Other American writers have claimed the four-year "liberal arts" college as a unique and peculiarly American institution. (2) But no tradition is without its roots, and the college as a free-standing four-year unit that exists between secondary schools and the complex university in the American system must look for its source in the thirteenth and fourteenth century universities of Western Europe and to Oxford and Cambridge at a time when the collegiate units of these institutions were in the ascendancy. Planted in the colonies on the North American continent, colleges remained independent units, assumed degree-granting authority, and in the three centuries since the establishment of the boarding school of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636, have retained in remarkable measure an orientation that marks them as survivors of an ancient tradition.

The first colleges were created to provide shelter and sustenance for scholars assembled at the sites of the great European universities. They became basic elements in the development of university education in France, Germany and England. This paper reviews from a historical and comparative perspective adaptations of the college within the systems of these countries and the United States of America. Admittedly, the view is slanted toward the contemporary American scene and the peculiar problems of a small question being addressed is whether an examination of such historical and comparative background provides a useful basis for assessing the present and future role of the free-standing baccalaureate-degree-granting institution in the United States.

The General Idea of the College

Credit for the "invention" of the college appears to lie with France and the first hospices attached to the University of Paris. For Paris "must be regarded as the home of the university collegiate system in the sense that academic colleges of a kind arose there earlier than anywhere else. (3) At the Hospital of the Blessed Mary of Paris, the Hôtel Dieu, near the Cathedral of Notre Dame, there had been set aside a single room for the use of poor clerks." In 1180 one Jocius de Londinnis purchased the room and endowed it

for the perpetual support of 18 poor clerks, and thus was created the Collège de Dix-Huit.

Apart from setting certain provisions regarding the religious duties of the clerks, there appears to have been no regulations for the direction of the college, but this rudimentary collegiate establishment at the Hôtel Dieu became the first of some 60 or 70 Parisian colleges of the medieval period. In general, colleges developed out of hospices established in university towns, whether the house was maintained by a master, a group of scholars, or by citizens interested in realizing income from rents, and the line between general residences and colleges was unclear, except that the colleges developed as more organized communities and with endowments that gave them a continuity that a hall or general residence dependent wholly on rents could not have.

It was Robert de Sorbon, chaplain to Louis IX, who seems to have taken the endowed hospice the next step, when in 1257 or 1258 he provided funds not only for rooms but for the support of certain advanced students in theology. In England the first colleges with similar endowments and provisions at the two universities appear to have been Merton at Oxford in 1264 and Peterhouse at Cambridge in 1284, although two more Oxford colleges, University College in 1280 and Balliol in 1282 preceded Peterhouse. In Germany each of the universities maintained one or more colleges, and some of the masters established private boarding houses for students known as bursen. The first American College, named Harvard College several years after its founding, was created in 1636 as a free-standing institution unrelated to any university. In the French and German universities the colleges later declined and finally disappeared. In the English universities the colleges developed as residential and teaching units to a high level. In the United States the residential college became the predominant form of postsecondary education.

The College in France

Almost 80 years passed between the establishment of the accommodations for 18 "poor clerks" at the Hotel Dieu and Robert de Sorbon's foundation for students in theology, but it was in the latter institution that the pattern for the French colleges was set. Initially providing for 16 students, four elected from each of the four nations at the University--French, Picards, Normans, English, the latter including non-French scholars and masters from northern and eastern Europe--the membership was increased later to 36. By the sixteenth century the Sorbonne had developed in a practical sense to become the University of Paris.

Control of the college was vested in Governors, whose membership was external to the college and appointed by the foundation. The Governors included the archdeacon and chancellor of Paris, the doctors of theology, the deans of the faculties of law and medicine, and the rector and proctors of the university. The day-to-day operation of the Sorbonne remained in the hands of the resident officers, but the Governors controlled the appointment of the head master, the filling of vacant fellowships and the management of the property. In this important respect the colleges of Paris differed significantly from those of Oxford and Cambridge; the colleges of Paris were controlled by persons outside the immediate membership, while the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge were autonomous, self-governing foundations.(4)

The colleges were established originally to provide maintenance and support for those who could not otherwise afford to remain at the university,

but the College d' Harcourt at the turn of the century, or early in the 1300s, became the first to admit paying scholars. Other colleges followed suit, and the role of the collegiate establishments was broadened. From the beginning the master/and or his assistants provided tutorial help for the scholars in the college. But this responsibility increased with the advent of the paying members. At Navarre, from the beginning the master was required "diligently to hear the lessons of the Scholars studying in the Faculty of Arts and faithfully to instruct them alike in life and in doctrine." (5) The limited lectures and reviews provided to supplement the teaching in the university schools gradually expanded, and the colleges were able to provide full-time employment for the more qualified regent masters. By the fifteenth century the colleges were competing with the schools of the university. At Paris the regent masters were complaining in 1445 that "almost the whole university resides in the colleges." By 1457 the university was requiring residence in colleges or hospices for all scholars.(6)

While the colleges took increasing responsibility for instruction at Paris, the faculties and nations, as old as the university itself, retained a large measure of authority. The nations were the outgrowth of the congregations of foreign masters and scholars in the arts faculty; by 1249 the division of the university into the four nations had been recognized by the Pope. The nations provided an individual scholar his privileges and immunities, maintained schools, and until the fifteenth century provided the lectures in the arts subjects. The nations were responsible for the examinations leading to the license. They also elected the rector who headed the faculty of arts. Ultimately, because members of the higher faculties had first graduated in arts and had taken the oath of obedience to the rector of arts, the rector came to head not only the arts faculty, but the university as a whole. The arts faculty was the largest in the university, including two-thirds of the total membership, and until members of the superior faculties of theology, law or medicine became masters or doctors in those faculties, they retained their membership in the arts faculty.

Although the university was changing from "a voluntary association of Masters, each with his individual School, and his own quota of pupils, whose fees belonged to the Master," to become "an association of Colleges, with full-time Masters, supported partly by the original Foundation, and partly by the regular fees of the paying Scholars," throughout the faculties and the nations the University at Paris maintained a degree of supervision and control of the colleges that far surpassed that at Oxford and Cambridge.(7) As Cobban observes:

> the college regents themselves, though nominated by collegiate heads, were appointed and removable by faculty authority, and to this degree, the university retained a supervisory role in the transformed teaching system which might extend, it seems to powers of inspecting the standard of college instruction. This element of university control over the Parisian college system forms yet another point of contrast with the English situation where the colleges developed as teaching islands with only the minimum of university direction.(8)

The colleges of Paris never gained the degree of independence of action that characterized the foundations at Oxford and Cambridge.

Teaching responsibilities at Paris were not equally distributed among the colleges, and a two-tier system soon developed in which the larger and better

endowed collegiate establishments played the major role, and the smaller and less well endowed colleges sent their members to the lectures in the larger institutions. The colleges had two functions, the administration of the facilities and teaching. The teaching function was identified by the term exercice, and those colleges which provided the complete range of instruction in the arts were referred to as collegès de plein exercice. Among the 44 secular colleges and the nine maintained by religious communities in the 1560s, ten were identified as collegès de plein exercice. (9)

The unrest that characterized the sixteenth century society spilled over into the university, and as the disturbances reached their height with pitched battles involving the students in the streets of Paris in the middle of the century, the Parlement de Paris issued a regulation in July, 1558 bringing greater civil control over the activities of the university community. (10) The decline of the university had begun.

The Council of Trent, the nineteenth ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church, convened from 1545 to 1563 in three sessions for the purpose of meeting the crisis of the Protestant Reformation. The Jesuits played a particularly important role in the second period of the Council, 1551-52. The Society of Jesus had grown out of a small band of six, who, together with Ignatius of Loyola and while students at Paris, had taken vows of poverty and chastity with the intent of going to the Holy Land to convert the Muslims. The Turkish Wars prevented their pursuit of that goal, and they turned their attention elsewhere. Approved as a community by Pope Paul III in 1540, the Society with French royal approval and protection, established itself in Paris and 1563 opened the College de Clermont. The college developed rapidly and was soon competing with the university. It provided a full secondary education as well as courses in theology, open to all without fee. Rapidly the Jesuits developed an extensive secondary system throughout France. A hundred years later, by the middle of the seventeenth century the Jesuits had become the dominant educators in France.

The University of Paris continued to decline, and by the end of the sixteenth century it had almost ceased to exist. Although 43 of the colleges still remained, not one of them was carrying on the work for which it had been originally intended with lecture rooms "converted into stables where the soldiery lodged their horses or in which farm animals were kept." (11) Efforts were made to revive the university by Henri IV, and revised code of 1600 called for all members of the university before taking a degree, to swear loyalty to the king and the magistrates. A system of inspection of the colleges was also instituted. In spite of the attempts at reform, the history of the university through the seventeenth century is "a record of mediocre achievement." (12) New attempts at the beginning of the eighteenth century brought some improvement. In 1719 the collegès de plein exercice were opened to all who wished to attend and without fees. The regent masters were paid out of the state treasury. (13)

Over the years the colleges of the Faculty of Arts, in providing preparatory work for admission to the superior faculties of theology, law and medicine, had become effectively secondary schools affording a six to eight-year course ending at about age 18. With the conclusion of collegiate instruction, the student could enter a university course in one of the advanced faculties. By 1789 there were 21 universities in France, of which 18 possessed arts faculties. At Paris, growing out of a reorganization in 1764, the number of colleges had been reduced to ten.

Until their expulsion in 1762, the Jesuits virtually dominated secondary

education in France, and their colleges rivaled the universities; the colleges even granted degrees.(14) In an attempt to develop a teaching corps equal to that of the deposed Jesuits, in 1766 a competitive examination, the agrégation, an examination which survives to the latter quarter of the twentieth century, was instituted.

The colleges of the University of Paris were suppressed with the Revolution, and the University never again reverted to collegiate lines.(15) In the provincial universities the colleges had been primarily boarding houses for students and few had emerged through the development as educational units.(16) By the end of 1792 the colleges and universities of the Ancien Regime had to a large extent been destroyed by the abolition of their sources of income and the requirement of the civil oath. On March 8, 1793, the Convention decided "that the endowments of colleges and other establishments of public instruction, under whatever title they exist, should be confiscated; but the actual buildings of colleges and the living quarters of teachers and pupils were to be spared."(17) With the reorganization of the French educational system in 1802, the lycees became the successors of the colleges, but no longer as residential or higher institutions. To carry on the tradition of preparation for the university, however, the lycees awarded on examination as the completion certificate the baccalaureate.

According to Paulsen, the decline of the colleges had begun two centuries before. After the Council of Trent and with the establishment of the episcopal seminaries for the education of the clergy, the fortunes of the university began to turn for the worse, as

> the theological faculties lost their students, and practically ceased to exist as educational establishments, and only the ghostly shadow of a degree, or rather title-conferring institution remained. At the same time the old faculties of arts, although they continued as corporate parts of the universities became transformed into independent lower schools(colleges) which had no essential connection with the higher faculties, and no vital relation to the literature and culture, philosophy and science of the day.(18)

and, he goes on to observe, in the university the faculties of law and medicine alone remained, "as independent professional schools."(19)

The College in Germany

While universities were underway in Paris and Oxford before 1200, it was not until the middle of the fourteenth century that the German states established their first universities. In order that his "faithful subjects who continually hungered for the fruits of science might find satisfaction at home and no longer be compelled to girdle the earth in search for knowledge, to hunt out strange people and to beg in foreign lands," Emperor Charles IV in 1348 founded for the Kingdom of Bohemia the first Germanic university in Prague.(20) The House of Hapsburg established the University of Vienna in 1365, and the Elector of the Palatinate founded the University of Heidelberg in 1385. Two more universities were established in the fourteenth century, the municipal universities of Cologne and Erfurt.

Unlike the French and English universities, the German universities did not grow out of groups of masters and scholars gathered in a town around

earlier ecclesiastical establishments but in most cases were the results of specific acts of civil authorities. They were founded by the territorial governments, as "the ruler called the school into being, supplied it with buildings and, at the right time, granted the universitas certain corporate rights such as autonomy, jurisdiction over its own members, and exemption from duties and taxes."(21) In most cases the universities were founded by the sovereigns of the different states, who endowed them with lands and money, and whose names they frequently bear."(22)

But in many respects the German universities followed the patterns established by the earlier foundations, particularly the University of Paris. As at Paris, the faculties were four in number, with the arts faculty taking responsibility for preparing the students for advanced study in the three higher faculties of theology, law and medicine. There were also four nations, groups designed to provide equal representation of foreign students -- although in Prague the conflict over the rights of the nations led to the virtual destruction of the university with the departure of the German nations in 1419.(23)

There were also significant differences between the German establishments and those of France, differences which reflected the particular needs and circumstances of the German setting -- "keine Nachbildung, sondern eine Neubildung," no copy or imitation, but a new structure.(24) As at Paris the doctors and masters were the principal elements, but the students in the German university exercised more authority as members of the corporation; teachers and scholars enrolled in the university together, took the same oath, were similarly members and subjects of the university. In most of the universities the students had a voice in the selection of the rector.(25)

If a distinction is made between the Lehranstalt, the place of instruction, and universitas, the association or society at a particular place of instruction, then the distinguishing feature of the German university in its early days was the strong connection between Lehranstalt and universitas. This closer identification of the membership of the academic community with the educational establishment led to the early development of a single entity different from the French and English foundations.(26)

The universitas consisted of the teachers and students, and the governing assembly consisted generally of the masters and doctors.(27) At Paris the nations persisted as important bodies for over two centuries, even after the colleges emerged as centers of power. In the German states, with the exception of Prague, where their conflicts proved disastrous, the nations exercised much less influence and after a time all but disappeared. As a consequence, the faculties became the constituent elements of the corporation.(28) While the faculties had their own organization and conducted their own affairs, they were under the authority of the university.(29) With the strong sense of the corporation the universities developed a unity that made the evolution into a college-university a logical consequence.

The colleges and halls, or bursen, were also parts of the corporation. While they maintained a degree of independence in representing the special rights and special interests of particular groups, they were subordinate to the university as a whole.(30) Colleges and bursen developed initially as different kinds of accommodations. In a strict sense, the colleges were houses established for masters of limited means, places where they could live together and attend to their further studies. Governed by

statutes modeled after the rules of the cloisters, but less stringent in demand, the colleges allowed the masters to share costs and maintain a common table. Financing came in part from pensions provided by foundations, income from "alumni," contributions and rents.(31) Endowed fellowships provided a stipend, and a member of a college holding such an award had the right and responsibility to share in the governance of the college. In addition, the stipend carried with it a lectureship. Decisions on the awards were shared by members of the college, the ruler, the faculty and others at the university.(32)

The bursen developed as residences for students. While the early colleges sometimes provided accommodations for the students, such was considered a concession to need and not a desirable development.(33) There were also private bursen, those established by masters who rented a house, or by a houseowner who himself was a bachelor or master from the university and has secured permission to set up such a residence.

Within the university, in time the distinction between the college, as the accommodation for the masters, and the bursen, as accommodations for the students, became blurred, and the lines between the two establishments became less clear. Finally, the term "college" was used to refer not only to the houses of the masters but also to the accommodations for the students.(34)

In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the colleges were providing the universities with endowed lecturers by virtue of the college fellowships. For a time college and university teaching were maintained separately, but gradually even this distinction disappeared as college and university teaching came to be performed by the same masters. As the colleges took on more and more responsibility for providing instruction, they were even more clearly merged into the university community. In some places the colleges served as university buildings, and the distinction between university and college was even further lost. College and university virtually were fused into a single entity, and there emerged the institutional form which may be labeled a college-university.(35) This particular structure was one of the major contributions toward the evolution of a permanent professorate in the universities of Northern Europe. The salaried professor became the norm, and the university was removed from dependence upon the "free flow of academic forces."(36)

Paulsen compares the German university to a "great boarding school," where teachers and students, at least in the faculty of arts, lived together in university buildings. He notes also that universities frequently maintained a paedagogium for primary Latin students.(37) These university preparatory institutions, providing training even before the students matriculated into the arts faculty, contained "the germ of separation between lower and higher instruction in liberal arts" and led at a later date to the development of the classical high school, the gymnasium, which prepared its graduates for the higher professional studies in the university.(38)

With the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, the communal life of the students and teachers in the colleges and bursen ceased as the cloister life and the celibacy of the masters began to disappear. Such bursen as persisted became the sites of preparatory work and were slowly severed from direct involvement in the universities. By the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century these had become separate institutions. The term gymnasium was being used in the sixteenth cen-

tury, and the classical high schools assisted the university further to abandon its preparatory departments and turn exclusively to the higher professional studies. (39) With the fourth decade of the sixteenth century state authorities moved to regulate the development of the classical schools in both the Protestant and Catholic regions. In those states within the Catholic regions the secondary came under the direction of the Jesuits, as in France. The basic structure of the institutions was the same in both regions.

As the structure of the preparatory schools became more clearly defined, those schools which proved to be maintaining a sufficiently rigorous course were "granted in future the exclusive right of preparing for the university." (40) The others became simply Latin schools or pro-gymnasia or burgher schools. The examination for graduation provided by the state authorities and the gymnasia were reserved for the advanced classical schools only.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the university students had dropped the clerical costume for that of the cavalier, with the dueling sword as an indispensable part of the equipment. The universities were no longer concerned for housing and maintaining the students. Some of the old pattern was maintained in the territorial convicta built for poor students and providing free lodging and board. Professors still received students as lodgers and boarders well into the eighteenth century. By the late nineteenth century the convicta had disappeared and the professors were no longer taking students into their homes. Paulsen observes, "the custom of living together in colleges and bursen peculiar to the English-American type of university since the middle ages, has almost disappeared from among us; in the Protestant territory the Tübingen Shift is the sole memorial of the past, among the Catholic theological faculties more is retained. (41) The student societies had taken the place of the bursen and were supplying "the student with something like a home at the university." (42)

The College in England

As in Paris, Oxford and Cambridge were the results of gradual development. There were schools at Oxford early in the twelfth century, and religious houses had been at Cambridge almost as long. The schools at Oxford had developed sufficiently that by 1165-1167 the complex was recognized as a studium generale, its status enhanced by the influx of English scholars expelled at that time from Paris. By 1200 there were some 3,000 students in the schools at Oxford. A town riot and a temporary cessation of lectures at Oxford in 1209 brought large numbers of students and masters to Cambridge (and to Reading and Paris as well) and gave the schools a boost toward university status, although Cambridge was not recognized as a studium generale until 1318.

At Oxford the arts faculty was divided into but two nations, representing divisions within England rather than distinctions between English and foreign scholars. The arts faculty was the major faculty, and the higher faculties were less well organized at Oxford than at Paris. The nations of the arts faculty played a limited role, and instead it was the Chancellor who emerged as a center of power. At Paris the Chancellor, or head teacher of the cathedral schools had assumed early the power of granting the license approving teachers for the schools. As the number of masters at Paris grew, the power of the Chancellor was challenged. In 1212 the masters were successful in

gaining from the pope much of the power that the Chancellor had maintained.(43) The masters, at least those of the arts faculty, were organized according to nations, and the nations remained centers of power in Paris well into the fifteenth century. At Oxford, in contrast, the Chancellor gained in power as the university developed. An ordinance of 1214 issued by Innocent III, following upon the riots of 1209, forced upon the town certain regulations and made grants of power to the Chancellor. Subsequent grants by Henry III in 1244 and Edward I in 1275 enhanced his power, and after the riots on St. Scholastica's day in 1354, when major jurisdiction in the town passed to the university, the Chancellor came to "dominate the University as no other official dominated any other institution in medieval times."(44)

In the early years the universities of Oxford and Cambridge could best be described as groups of masters and associated students living in whatever hired premises they could secure. The universities owned little or no property. A student had three possibilities for housing. He could take a room in a tavern or private house in the village. If he were wealthy enough, and few were, he could rent an entire house for himself and his group. Or, he could go to a hall or hostel, the choice of the majority of students of moderate means.(45)

The evolution of the halls and hostels at the English universities was not unlike the developments in Paris. Students found that by living in groups, sharing costs, they were able to secure quarters at lower rates, buy food cheaper and through organizing better protect themselves in the town. Graduates of the universities saw possibilities of income in managing residential halls, and some rented quarters to develop lodging for students. Initially there was no university supervision, until, to counteract increasing tendencies to exploitation, the university required the principal of a hall to register and to renew his license annually. He was also asked to post security and to maintain residence in the house. The pattern of residence life was established, and by 1432 all scholars were required to dwell in a hall or college.(46)

The halls remained the dominant feature of university life into the sixteenth century. Most of the students at Oxford and Cambridge lived in inns and hostels and halls. In the middle of the fifteenth century there were 69 halls in Oxford. But then the colleges began to assume more importance. In 1469 there were about 50 halls, in 1501 about 31, in 1511 about 25, and by 1552 only 8 remained.(47)

As in Paris, because of the length and cost of pursuing work in the higher faculties, there was an obvious need to provide accommodations and financial support for secular scholars (those not members of religious orders) who wished to study for a higher degree. At Paris, the Sorbonne was the first strictly graduate secular college. At Oxford, Merton is credited as the first such foundation, although Sir John de Balliol, regent of Scotland had under duress in 1260 made all-too-modest provisions for the maintenance of poor scholars at Oxford; it was only in 1282, through the efforts of Sir John's widow that the college could actually be established.

Walter de Merton's grant in 1263 established the pattern for the English colleges, one unlike that of Paris and that informing the later developments in the German states. For the scholars whom Sir Walter endowed "were not pensioners administered by others, but corporate landowners."(48) The college fellows, as a corporation, owned and controlled the endowment of the

college. With this grant the college had a measure of independence that shaped its own existence and the subsequent English foundations in ways quite different from the colleges of Paris and the later foundations in Germany.

The college established by Merton was also a self-governing community, and the structure of that college became the pattern for those founded afterwards. In every college founded before 1500, with the exception of King's Hall at Cambridge, the fellows of the college received by statute the right of electing the warden, master, president or provost--whatever the title of the head master, and confirmation by an outside authority such as the bishop or chancellor was pro-forma. With the independence of the chancellor and the autonomy of the colleges the university establishments in England moved in directions different from those in France and Germany, even as they maintained certain similar features.

Paris had opened the doors of the colleges to a larger constituency with the action of the College d'Harcourt to admit paying scholars. At Oxford changes began with the establishment of New College in 1379, a foundation impressive not only in terms of the number of fellowships and in scale of buildings, but also in the provision of William of Wykeham that a sizable undergraduate element would be included as a permanent part of the collegiate community.(49) Then Bishop Waynflete, the father of Magdalen College at Oxford, in 1458 provided that twenty sons of "noble and powerful personages, being friends of such college" would be admitted at their own expense.(50) By the late fourteenth century the colleges were becoming mixed communities of graduates and undergraduates, differing in this respect from the pattern of Merton. The admission of fee-paying students in the middle of the fifteenth century opened wider the doors of the colleges, and much of the reason for the existence of the halls disappeared.

The colleges were also beginning to offer instruction to supplement the university lectures. Earlier, the hall lectures had been delivered by the principals and their graduate assistants, but as the colleges developed, they included tutorial staff the halls could not provide. The presence of the tutorial assistance was particularly attractive to the undergraduates who were less and less inclined to attend the lectures of the regent masters in the university schools.(51) Then college lectureships were established, at first at Magdalen in 1479-80, whereby fellows of the college or persons from outside the college were appointed to deliver a course of lectures within the college at an agreed-upon salary. Nearly every college was providing some form of lectures by the end of the fifteenth century. During the sixteenth century the colleges became more and more self-contained teaching units, and unlike the system at Paris, there was not two-tier arrangement, but each college provided a full complement of instruction. The colleges had become the predominant elements of the universities.

The next step toward collegiate autonomy was taken under Elizabeth I. The emergence of Puritan strength at Oxford in the person of Thomas Cartwright, Lady Margaret professor of divinity, brought the possibility that a Puritan might be elected vice-chancellor. Election of the vice-chancellor was by the regent masters. The more conservative elements at Cambridge became sufficiently concerned that they drew up a set of statutes

in which the university was redefined as a society of colleges rather than a society of regent masters. The new statutes placed the authority, influence and responsibility upon the heads of the colleges or houses. (52) Elizabeth approved the new statutes on September 25, 1570. At Oxford in 1628 another series of events led to a similar change in the constitution of the university.

Thus, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge had become the basic and dominant units of the university. In accommodations and caliber of instruction, the colleges had edged out the system of public instruction. The Elizabethan Statutes gave the colleges control of the university through the election of the vice-chancellor. The role of the regent masters declined. Earlier, every graduate was required to remain at the university for a time to participate in the public lectures and disputations, but now only the graduates who were elected to fellowships in their respective colleges were required to remain. In this situation, rather than giving themselves fully to the study in one of the higher faculties, the new fellows became increasingly involved in the instruction of the undergraduates. The universities were evolving into undergraduate institutions primarily dedicated to the single aim of the "virtuous education of youth." (53)

The essential form achieved by the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge by the mid-seventeenth century prevails well into the twentieth century. This is not to say that there have been no changes, because there has been an expansion in the range of studies, the founding of new colleges, reform movements, particularly in the mid-1800s under the Royal Commission. But Flexner in his Rhodes lectures in 1928 observes that "The main preoccupation of Oxford and Cambridge has. . . for centuries been undergraduate and still is . . ." (54) An Driver observes that Oxford and Cambridge are the institutions that provide a "true continuity" with the medieval university of masters. (55) On the basis of his visits during 1923-24, the American, Leon Richardson of Dartmouth College, in a special study undertaken for Dartmouth observes:

> The college of [Oxford and Cambridge], instead of dying out as it did in the continental universities, soon absorbed practically all the powers of the institution except those of setting examinations and granting degrees. While the reaction from this extreme position is underway, in Oxford at least that condition is not far from the one existing today. [underlining added] (56)

Since World War II there has been an increasing emphasis on research, and the colleges have taken on larger components of graduate students. Driver notes that in the 1960s Balliol became the first Oxford college to house one graduate for every two undergraduates, a pattern followed to a lesser degree by certain other of the Oxford foundations. But, writes Driver, "In Oxford . . . there is now some pressure to make the university whose pride was the liberal education of undergraduates a preserve of graduates," a move that will be resisted by many, but "Oxford and Cambridge are very expensive places in which to conduct undergraduate teaching, and their 'plant'--the Bodleian, the Ashmolean, the Taylorian, and all the other libraries and institutes in the city--exist primarily for serious scholarly work." (57)

Boorstin, in commenting on the early development of the American college, observes about the English distinction between university and college, that there has always been a more or less sharp and distinction between the college, which refers primarily to a place of residence or of instruction, but without the power to give examinations or grant degrees, and the university, which refers to a degree-granting institution offering advanced instruction and possessing special legal authority. He notes that until the establishment of London University in 1826-1827 there were only two English universities and that the monopoly of Oxford and Cambridge universities was complete:

> Until the early 19th century. . . there were many English "colleges" but only two "universities," Oxford and Cambridge. Efforts to found additional degree-granting institutions were repeatedly defeated. For example, Gresham College, founded in 1548, possessed seven professorships and eventually became a great center of learning in the form of the Royal Society of London; but it never became a university. The "dissenting academies," which produced such figures as Daniel Defoe, Bishop Joseph Butler, Joseph Priestley, and Thomas Malthus, survived in the form of secondary schools ("public" schools) or theological institutions, but did not acquire the power to grant degrees . . . . The significance of all this for English life and learning, while complicated and not easy to define, was nevertheless persistent and pervasive. (58)

Driver reiterates the importance of the distinction, "The Royal Charter... is a document just as vital to a modern British university as it was in the Middle Ages . . . . The difference in Britain between places for research and higher education which have Charters and are called universities, and those which owe constitutional allegiance to local educational authorities and are called polytechnics, is very marked, and would be even if there were no difference in academic standards and physical facilities." (59)

Colleges as non-degree granting institutions did arise apart from the two ancient universities, but slowly. There was not only Gresham, to which Boorstin refers, but King James' short-lived Chelsea College founded in 1609. There were efforts to found universities at Ripon (1604), Carlisle (1617), Manchester (1640), and York (1640). (60) And Durham (1649) was a university for a short time under Cromwell. The Dissenters' academies took on the character of independent colleges in the 1700s. Mathematical societies promoted lectures. Other societies met to discuss cultural issues and technical problems, even eventuating in such an organization as the College of Science in Manchester in 1783. But the term college covered a wide range of institutional forms. In the 1800s mechanics' institutes multiplied with amazing rapidity, some of which became technical institutes and colleges. Birkbeck College in London grew out of the London Mechanics' Institute. (61) That colleges and institutes constituted a fairly wide development is noted by the fact that the University of London as the umbrella organization founded in 1832 to unite University College (London University) and King's College, by 1851 included some 29 general colleges and nearly 60 medical colleges. (62)

The civic universities emerged during the first decade of the twentieth century--Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Bristol -- followed later by Nottingham, Southampton, Hull, Exeter, Leicester and Reading (which had been a university college since the 1920s). But, while growing out of local colleges in most cases, these were not patterned after the residential colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, but severed a largely commuting study body. The post-World War II "plate-glass universities"--Sussex, York, East Anglia, Essex, Lancaster, Kent, Warwick--to various degrees reflect an allegiance to the idea of the college, but as Driver notes in commenting on Lancaster, they are not collegiate in the sense of Oxbridge:

> The university is collegiate, not in the sense that Oxbridge is collegiate, with each college enjoying financial and academic autonomy, but in the sense that all undergraduates and dons, whether actually in residence or not, are members of one of the six colleges, whose buildings include, as well as all the necessary social facilities for both junior and senior members, the teaching and office rooms for departments in non-laboratory subjects. (63)

In the mid-1970s two of the colleges of education, under threat of forced merger with universities or polytechnics decided to go their own way and ask the Council for National Academic Awards to approve their proposals for the B.Ed. degree courses, One, Didsbury, was approved in October 1973 and became the first to offer all of its students a three-year teacher training qualification and a degree.(64) In September, 1974 Berkshire College of Education became, in effect, Britain's first independent liberal arts college. Students were enrolled for a new four-year Bachelor of Education honors degree, awarded by CNAA. Berkshire became the only British institution of higher education that was neither university nor polytechnic "concentrating on the arts and human sciences with particular reference to their applications in teaching and other professions. (65) But, neither Didsbury nor Berkshire were wholly independent, since Didsbury's degrees are through the CNAA and Berkshire was working for validation of a degree jointly offered with the University of Surrey. As Roy Niblett remarked in the Times Higher Education Supplement in reference to other developments, Britain was still at an early stage in creating a system of higher education. (66)

The College in the United States

The history of the college in the United States is shorter by centuries than the history of the universities and colleges of France, Germany and England. The first attempt at the foundation of an institution of higher education in what was to become the United States was made in 1619 when the Virginia Company of Old England made a grant of 10,000 acres of land for the establishment of a university at Henrico; this was just 12 years after the founding of Jamestown. Nothing came of that effort in Virginia until the chartering of the College of William and Mary in 1693, some 74 years later.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony in the northern colonies was more successful. The General Court of Massachusetts Bay on October 28, 1636

voted: "to give four hundred pounds toward a school or college." (67) A year later, on November 16, 1637, it was agreed that the college would be located at Newetown, later named Cambridge, and on November 20 the Court appointed a Board of Overseers to look to the securing of a building and to supervise the establishment of the school.

In July or August, 1638 the college opened, with a handful of scholars and one master. In September, 1639 the school closed with the dismissal of the master, Nathaniel Eaton. In the meantime, the college had been given the name of its first major benefactor, John Harvard, graduate of Cambridge, Emanuel College, recently come to the colonies. The college reopened in August, 1640 with a new master, Henry Dunster, and it has survived ever since. The first commencement was on September 23, 1642; the enrollment at that time included nine commencers, four junior sophisters, eight or ten freshmen. The first course was three years in length, but was soon extended to a full four-year program.

Harvard College remained without competition for the next half century, until William and Mary College was chartered in Virginia in 1693. In the next three-quarters of a century these two colleges were joined by seven others--Yale (1701), Princeton (College of New Jersey, 1746), Columbia (King's, 1753, 1755); Pennsylvania (College of Philadelphia, 1755), Brown (College of Rhode Island, 1764), Rutgers (Queen's, 1766), Dartmouth (1765). In addition, a Presbyterian academy, relocated from Pennsylvania in 1765, and later to become the University of Delaware, was in existence in Delaware. What years later became St. John's College was founded as King Williams School, of less than college level, at Annapolis, Maryland in 1696.

What immediately strikes one about these early institutions is: (a) they were created as independent foundations, located in widely scattered geographical places, and had no direct relation to one another, unlike the earlier European colleges which grew up as part of a university; (b) as in the German foundations, but only to a limited extent, the American colleges were established by official action of the state, governor, or crown, and yet they were independent of the government and controlled by a board of lay persons--citizens, magistrates, clergy--who were neither faculty nor students and who maintained only an alliance of sorts with the government. (68); (c) unlike the French and English institutions, they were established de novo and could not identify with an earlier assemblage of scholars and masters; (d) they were complete units in that they offered a total, even if limited, curriculum; (e) while in no way related to any university structure, they began as degree-granting institutions; (f) only instruction in the arts was offered, and initially there was nothing resembling a higher faculty in theology, law or medicine.

The independence of the American colleges was in no small way due to the critical role played by the lay boards, which were established in the U.S. courts in 1819 as the parties responsible for the maintenance and operation of the instituituons. (69) The English colleges were self-governing property owners. The colleges of Germany were closely identified with the corporation, ultimately joined into a college-university and maintained by the prince or ruler of the state. The French colleges, although governed by civil, clerical and university officials separate from the membership of the college, were still answerable through faculty/nations to the univer-

sity. The lay board of the American colleges was most like the College Council of the Scottish universities, but membership of an American board extended far beyond the local town and assumed a legal and fiscal responsibility far beyond that of a Council.

During the colonial period the four-year free-standing college was the form of higher education in what was to become the United States of America, and the arts curriculum was the curriculum. There were attempts at variation. King's announced at its founding a far more ambitious intent--courses in surveying, navigation, geography, history and natural philosophy, "the Knowledge . . . of Everything useful for the Comfort, the Convenience and Elegance of Life . . . and everything that can contribute to . . . Happiness." (70) But the curriculum soon dropped back into traditional arts sequences. King's in 1767 did introduce a medical department. Philadelphia was no less ambitious, for it announced plans for study in the classics, mathematics, physics, biology, botany, modern literature and history. But the institution remained small in enrollment and limited in scope, although it too introduced a medical curriculum in 1765.

The four-year arts curriculum and the baccalaureate degree dominated the American "system" from 1640, the year of the reopening of Harvard College into the 1800s, well over two hundred years. There attempts to change the form of curriculum and to develop new institutions. Between 1786 and 1800 several leading citizens and governmental officials advanced proposals for a national system of education with a University in the new city of Washington as the capstone. The idea was never accepted widely enough, although proponents continued to advance proposals into the last half of the twentieth century. (71)

There were also attempts to develop comprehensive state universities from 1784 to 1860. The state of Georgia granted 40,000 acres of land for an endowment of a college or "seminary of learning," and in 1785 chartered a degree-granting institution. The institution was given an independent and self-perpetuating board and after 1842 did not receive direct support from the state legislature until much later in the century. Its curriculum was limited to a basic arts sequence. Institutions were also established by the states of North Carolina, Vermont, South Carolina, Virginia, but none could claim the title of university in the sense of providing advanced instruction. Most operated as though they were independent arts colleges under self-perpetuating boards and were very little different from the large number of privately established institutions throughout the country.

In addition to the efforts to establish a national university and to create state institutions, there were moves to increase state control over existing independent or private foundations. Yale, the College of Philadelphia, Kings College, Harvard, William and Mary and Dartmouth all faced specific efforts to their states to establish control over them. Significantly, in the instances of Philadelphia, King's and Dartmouth, the state efforts included changing the names from colleges to universities -- to the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, Dartmouth University. All three regained their independent status, and remained for the time as colleges, but King's and Philadelphia adopted the names of Columbia and University of Pennsylvania. When the flurry of activity was over, par-

ticularly with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of Dartmouth, in which the board of trustees was identified as the continuing legal corporation and the charter as a contract not to be impaired in any way by the state, the four-year college was still the prevailing model.

In the first half of the nineteenth century many local colleges were created. Donald Tewksbury found records of some 516 colleges established in 16 states before 1860. (72) In Boorstin's view, in America a college "was of a piece with the community emphasis which already distinguished our civilization." (73) As America expanded into the West, tiny communities planted here and there almost inevitably were referred to as "cities," more in expectation of the future than in reflection of the actual status of the community. An important way of proving that a new settlement would soon be a great city was "to provide it as quickly as possible with all the metropolitan hallmarks, which included not only a newspaper and a hotel, but an institution of higher learning." (74) By 1851 America was being referred to as a "land of colleges." (75) No community seemed complete without its college. Before 1870 some eleven colleges had been established in the state of Kentucky, twenty-one in Illinios, thirteen in Iowa, and corresponding numbers in the other localities. Less than 20 percent of these institutions survived nationwide, but 1860 over 700 colleges had been created and had gone out of existence. (76)

While the single-purpose four-year college dominated American higher education in these years, there were continuing efforts to reform the curriculum and structure. George Ticknor and Edward Everett traveled to Göttingen in Germany in 1815, found the University an exciting change from the American college. The preparatory arts faculty as a part of the university had long since disappeared; lectures and research were the tasks of the higher education. Everett later became president of Harvard. Ticknor joined the Harvard faculty as professor of modern languages on his return, sought to introduce some aspects of the German university pattern, but he accomplished little outside of giving his own area a kind of departmental status. Efforts at reform were also under way at Vermont, Amherst, Nashville, but little of permanence emerged. Early in the 1830s Charles Beck, a graduate of Tübingen who had been forced to leave Germany because of political pressure, tried to establish a graduate department for language instructors at Harvard. The experiment in a Pegagogical Seminary was short-lived. In the meantime, the Yale Corporation issued in 1828 a classic defence of the liberal arts curriculum, and Yale's position found support throughout the country. Brubacher and Rudy refer to the Yale Report as "probably the most influential publication in the whole history of American higher education between the Revolution and the Civil War." (77)

On July 2, 1862 President Abraham Lincoln signed an "Act Donating Lands for Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts." The Act, named after its author, Justin Morrill, provided 30,000 acres of federal land for every congressman and senator to each of the states, on condition that the sale of the land provide an endowment for the establishment of a college "where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies . . . to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life." (78) While the implementation of the act was slow

initially and the early land grant colleges looked not greatly different from four-year arts colleges, the Act set in motion forces that profoundly altered the direction of American higher education. Within eight years 37 states had accepted the terms of the act. Presently, every state in the Union has at least one land-grant college.

Other specialized institutions and programs had developed by the early nineteenth century, engineering at West Point (1802), law at William and Mary (1779), theology at Andover Seminary (1808). Yet the norm of higher education was the four-year arts college. Then, land-grant funds and private philanthropy joined to create Cornell University in 1865, and the United States had the beginning of a university, as distinct from a college. The fortune of Johns Hopkins provided the endowment for the first true university, an institution opening in 1876 to offer advanced study and one that added the undergraduate component only later. Clark (1888) and Chicago (1892) followed shortly thereafter, even as Harvard, Yale, Columbia were becoming more complex and changing from colleges to universities with specialized faculties and studies. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of the American university, and educational leaders looked upon the four year college as having fulfilled its mission. Many were predicting that the stronger colleges would become universities -- and some did--and that the weaker would become junior colleges -- which did not occur. Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia, writing in 1902, held that at least two years of the work done by the typical college was being accomplished by the preparatory schools. It was his position that with the increase in the age for admission from 15 to 16 to 18 and with the demands of the professional schools, the college would in one or two generations cease to exist if it continued to demand four years of general education. He advocated cutting the course to three or four years. (79) President Jordan of Stanford was saying in 1903, "Every successful college points toward the university and as far as possible strives to become such" and that the college is "a small university; antiquated, belated, arrested, starved as the case may be; but with university aspirations to be realized in such degree as it can." He held that in time the college would disappear, the "best will become universities, the others will return to their place as academies." (80)

Paulsen looked at the American college as an institution inserted between the secondary school and the university:

> In America . . . between the school proper and the university proper -- the graduate school -- there has been inserted an intermediate grade, the college. The four years spent at college . . . answer, therefore, to the last years at school and the first years at the university with us. And the methods and customs correspond to the dual nature of the college; they are no longer entirely those of the school and not entirely those of the university. (81)

In one sense, the college was a confusing and confused institution. To Paulsen it could fit neither into the school (secondary education) system, nor into the university (higher education) system. Flexner referred to the American college as an "advanced secondary school." (82) Herbst describes the ambiguous position of an organization, the college, "which is neither

a college nor a university," and notes how the development of the university and the introduction of the German concept of professional education was exceedingly threatening to the American college at the turn of the century. (83)

Richardson describes the general attitude of the 1920s, when not a few observers were even more convinced that the years of the four-year college were numbered:

> Obviously it would be logical to expect its disappearance. Pressed from above by the development of graduate instruction, and from below by the extension of the public secondary school, and its off-shoot the junior college; hemmed in by the professional schools with their ever-increasing demands of the student; its purpose out of touch with the narrowly utilitarian requirements of the age; there seems good reason to fear that it either would be squeezed out of existence or its field so narrowly restricted as to make its place in the educational system one of relatively slight importance. (84)

And yet, in the 1920s the college was quite alive; indeed in Richardson's view, it had never been "more alive, more virile, more confident of its position, than today." (85)

The growth of American higher education following World War II saw the emergence of universities of 20,000 and more students, the creation of university systems in New York and California. And the college as such appeared to be less and less the model for American higher education. Instead, the prevailing image became that of the "multiversity." (86) At the other end of the system, the two-year junior college strongly endorsed by President William Rainey Harper of the University of Chicago in the early decades of the twentieth century as a way of relieving the university of its preparatory role, was the most rapidly growing institution in the country and dropping the name "junior college" for a more comprehensive term, "community college."

Once again, in the 1980s, the question is being raised regarding the future of the four-year, free-standing baccalaureate-degree-granting institution. A Carnegie Council report issued in 1980 refers to a certain portion of these institutions as the "most vulnerable" under the economic and social pressures acting upon American postsecondary institutions in the 1980s and 1990s. (87) Earlier, the updating of the classification lists developed by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in its studies suggested a major shift in the orientation of the four-year college. The listing issued in 1970 included 721, or 25 percent of the higher institutions at that time, in the categories of liberal arts colleges. In 1976, a new listing included only 583, or 19 percent of higher educational institutions at that time. The portion of enrollment in the liberal arts colleges had fallen from 8 percent to 5 percent. (88) Many of the colleges had been reclassified in the category of "comprehensive colleges or universities."

Eric Ashby, writing about the American higher educational system in 1971, refers to the "bewildering diversity of prestige and purpose" among the undergraduate colleges (89) and takes note of the growing uncertainty regarding their function in the total system:

> There is a great deal of uneasiness and controversy about the curriculum in these four-year colleges. The prime purpose of most professional education in universities is pretty clear (the exception is the Ph.D. in liberal arts and sciences . . .) and feedback from the professions, though not an unmixed blessing, constantly reviews and refines this purpose. The prime purpose of the community college is clear, although concentration upon transfer courses overemphasizes on one segment of this purpose. So also is the prime purpose of vocational courses in the state colleges, e.g. courses to equip people to teach, to nurse, to engage in business. But the prime purpose of the liberal arts bachelor course in a four-year college is not clear any longer, and in many colleges the concentration on preparing students to enter professional schools makes it difficult . . . for those colleges to develop an independent and indigenous curriculum. (90)

The dilemma of the early 1900s is back, but it has renewed force in a time of falling enrollments and climbing costs.

Another writer sees the college as "the most long-lived and the most distinctive of American schools, with that precarious stability which characterizes typically American institutions." (91) But to exist in "precarious stability" is not particularly comforting, and one wonders whether the condition has not become more "precarious" than stable.

Postcript

The idea of the college as a residential and instructional entity preparing students for advanced study in the university by establishing basic knowledge in the liberal arts has a long history in Europe and the United States -- nearly 800 years in the European setting. In his lectures at Oxford in 1928 Flexner comments, "In so far as undergraduate teaching is concerned, I have been searching for a term that will describe what the ancient universities accomplis. I have not found the word in English. I wonder, however, whether the German word, Bildung, does not roughly answer my purpose." (92) I am inclined to agree with Flexner that Bildung is the useful word, with its suggestions of "knowledge, culture, the power of expression, character, manners, a rare balancing and maturing of qualities calculated to equip men to meet with dignity and competency the responsibilities of life," to use Flexner's own definition of the term. If there is any continuity in the concept of the college, it is probably this conception of education.

The institutional forms in which this function of education has, at least in ideal, been expressed in the earliest French, German, English and even the American institutions, was strangely similar -- four years of study in a residential environment culminating in a baccalaureate. But the forms have undergone radical adaptation in each of the cultures. In France, by the eighteenth century the college had been moved out of the university and into the role of secondary and preparatory institutions. After the Revolution the college was clearly a secondary and non university structure, and the university concentrated on professional studies. In Germany, the college was at first merged into the university, and then its

functions were separated from the university. By the nineteenth century the university had been relieved of its preparatory function by the development of the strong classical secondary schools, the gymnasien. And the German universities were focused on scientific study, scientific in the sense of wissenschaftlich, and a dominant force in the western world. In England, much of the tradition of the university as a place for further study in and of culture had been preserved, but the study of the arts disciplines was at an advanced and specialized level. In the United States, though the colleges were established much later, they retained into and through the twentieth century the commitment to the ancient role of the arts faculties. Yet, in the American institutions there is ambivalence and confusion about this role of higher education, and the future of the free-standing, four-year, baccalaureate-degree-granting college seems more problematic.

Conant observed the tension in the contemporary college in the early 1950s. He was president at the time the Harvard Committee issued the Report on General Education in a Free Society. In Education and Liberty, he wrote that in the United States experimentation with various types of courses underway were attempts to find a modern equivalent of the kind of liberal education that was once the product of the collegiate way of life of the first American colleges. (93) But the earlier colleges were developed for the few, and he asks: "Are we sure that full-time education up to age twenty-one or twenty-two is beneficial for all types of individuals?" And he goes on to suggest that the four-year college may have a limited role to play. Yet, there appears to be a resurgence in the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s in the place of "general education" in post-secondary education. Harvard had earlier virtually equated "general education" and "liberal education." (94) General accrediting agencies require a substantial base of general education, or provision for such, in the curriculum of a college or university seeking recognition. (95)

Joseph Ben-David, as did Ashby, wrote a commentary on the American system of higher education. He finds that most of the "experiments" in general education from the 1930s to the 1960s had only limited success and that the "idea of general education has been most consistently upheld in a few small colleges, such as Bennington, Sarah Lawrence, Shimer, St. John's and Goddard." (96) The problem in general education -- and by implication, in colleges primarily oriented to general education -- is that it implies a commitment to certain values; there are certain moral assumptions implicit in the idea of general education, say Ben-David, and it has been assumed that "such education created a superior person. His superiority was aesthetic. . . it was also moral . . . finally, it was an intellectual superiority, since the cultivated mind was capable of the critical reflection and intellectual autonomy of which others were not capable." (97) And herein is the American dilemma. For "college education in the United States was not meant for the selected few, and was certainly not meant to be a selection process." (98) He questions whether general education can ever be an effective principle in contemporary American higher education.

Each person is likely to draw his own lessons from the past. The events of the past do not by any means create a necessary pattern for the future, although they often set the limits within which new developments can or are likely to take place. A review of the evolution, and indeed of the metamorphosis, of the college in European society and in the United States suggests to me that the number of traditionally oriented four-year colleges

will indeed decline. At least those who take as the sole responsibility that of general or liberal education will have less of a role to play in the future. The predictions of the early 1900s seem to be more likely to be realized in the years to come. Those arts colleges that are parts of universities -- the typical college of arts and science in a complex university -- may decline in enrollment, but they are less likely to disappear, because they can more effectively stand between the ancient arts tradition and the contemporary specialized studies, and they can permit the undergraduate student the freedom to keep options open, because in their departments, in their relations with other units of a university, they can point the students to many possibilities. On the other hand the independent, free-standing, four-year, baccalaureate college does not have the upper division options nor the proximity (on the same campus) of the professional and specialized faculties.

Indeed, some of the stronger four-year colleges will do more than survive -- but they may also be transformed, even as they are unaware of the process, into variations on the ancient theme of sufficient nature to cause them to be new and different kinds of institutions. For other four-year colleges, perhaps the shift that is suggested by the Carnegie classification reports is indicative of their future. In any event, the debate will continue in the United States. They system continues to evolve, and the shape is still fluid.

NOTES

NOTES

1. Frederick Rudolph, The American College (New York: Vintage Books, 1962,) p. 87.

2. Leon B. Richardson, A Study of the Liberal College (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College, 1924), Chapter I.

3. Alan B. Cobban, The Medieval Universities: Their Development and Organization (London: Methuen and Col, 1975), p. 127.

4. Ibid., p. 129.

5. Nathan Schachner, The Medieval Universities (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1938), p. 144.

6. Ibid,, p. 145.

7. H.C. Barnard, The French Tradition in Education (Cambridge: University Press, 1922), p. 5.

8. Cobban, op. cit., p. 132.

9. Barnard, op. cit., pp. 286-287.

10. Ibid., p. 16.

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